

sensible that something had gone wrong. "We are taken in flank!" called out some one; and looking along the left, sure enough there were dark figures jumping over the bank into the lane and firing up along our line. The volunteers in reserve, who had come down to take the place of the Guards, must have given way at this point; the enemy's skirmishers had got through our line and turned our left flank. How the next move came about I cannot recollect, or whether it was without orders, but in a short time we found ourselves out of the lane and drawn up in a straggling line about thirty yards in rear of it—at our end, that is, the other flank had fallen back a good deal more—and the enemy were lining the hedge, and numbers of them were passing over and forming up on our side. Beyond our left, a confused mass were retreating, firing as they went, followed by the advancing line of the enemy. We stood in this way for a short space, firing at random as fast as we could. Our colonel and major must have been shot, for there was no one to give an order, when somebody on horseback called out from behind—I think it must have been the brigadier—"Now, then, Volunteers! give a British cheer, and go at them—charge!" and with a shout, we rushed at the enemy. Some ran, some of them stopped to meet us, and for a moment it was a real hand-to-hand fight. I felt a sharp sting in my leg, as I drove my bayonet right through the man in front of me. I confess I shut my eyes, for I just got a glimpse of the poor wretch as he fell back, his eyes starting out of his head, and, savage though we were, the sight was almost too horrible to look at. But the struggle was over in a second, and we had cleared the ground again right up to